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## U.S. paying the price for spy folly

President Reagan has insisted twice that the administration was caught completely off guard by Israel's massive invasion of Lebanon on June 6. If so, there ought to be more than a few red faces at the Central Intelligence Agency.

If the CIA cannot detect the telltale signs of an imminent invasion involving tens of thousands of massed Israeli troops, a partial call-up of reservists, and the movement of several thousand tanks, armored vehicles, artillery pieces and hundreds of aircraft, something is seriously wrong with America's intelligence community.

And, in fact, something is wrong. This most recent failure of intelligence — made all the more inexcusable by the fact that Israel is an open society and a de facto ally of the United States — is but the latest in a dismal series. Six months ago, the administration was caught similarly unaware by a declaration of martial law in Poland that had obviously been planned months in advance.

In December 1979, the Carter administration was totally surprised by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan — an act of premeditated aggression carried out by five Soviet army divisions and requiring a lengthy mobilization along the Soviet-Afghan frontier. And a year before that, the CIA had remained blissfully ignorant of the revolutionary storm that would shortly depose America's closest ally in the strategically vital Persian Gulf region.

It is hardly a coincidence that these glaring intelligence lapses followed closely on the heels of the Carter administration's decision to de-emphasize the collection of so-called "human-source"

intelligence, known in the trade as HUMINT.

Carter's CIA director, Adm. Stansfield Turner, dutifully purged the agency's HUMINT branch by summarily dismissing more than 800 senior intelligence officers responsible for managing the clandestine collection of intelligence in foreign countries.

The staggering damage inflicted by these wholesale firings has never been repaired, and probably cannot be made good for years to come. Nor have the resulting intelligence gaps been filled, as anticipated, by such electronic intelligence-gathering means as photo reconnaissance from satellites and aircraft and the monitoring of radio transmissions.

One example in particular suggests the terrible cost of the Carter-Turner purge. It has been reliably reported that a full year after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, not one CIA officer in that country could speak Russian! The thought of an agency case officer attempting to recruit Soviet agents through a translator would be laughable were it not so pathetic.

Last month, President Reagan went to CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., to sign legislation making it a crime to knowingly reveal the identity of a clandestine American agent. Reagan assured the assembled CIA employees that they were on the "winning side" in the East-West struggle.

The president and his CIA director, William Casey, could lend added credence to that prediction by redoubling efforts to rebuild the still-shattered clandestine service.